

These amendments are made solely to facilitate prosecution of certain embodiments of the invention and not as an admission that Birang in combination with Blalock are valid prior art, or would otherwise render the original claims obvious. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the original claims in a continuation application.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made".

All of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

40. (Amended) A method of endpointing mechanical or chemical-mechanical planarization processing of microelectronic-device substrate assemblies, comprising:

initially passing a light beam from an illumination site in a table through a first optically transmissive view site located at first area within an elongated slot in a polishing pad to at least periodically impinge a first substrate assembly with the light beam and optically sense a surface condition of the first substrate assembly;

advancing the polishing pad relative to the table and the illumination site after planarizing the first substrate assembly; and

subsequently passing a light beam from the illumination site in the table through a second optically transmissive view site in the polishing pad to at least periodically impinge a second substrate assembly with the light beam and optically sense a surface condition of the second substrate assembly the second view site being located a second area of the elongated slot spaced apart from the first area.

43. (Amended) A method for planarizing microelectronic-device substrate assemblies, comprising:

removing material from a first substrate assembly by pressing the first substrate assembly against a planarizing surface of a polishing pad and moving the first substrate assembly with respect to the polishing pad;

initially passing a light beam from an illumination site in the table through an optically transmissive view site comprised of an elongated slot in the polishing pad to at least periodically impinge the first substrate assembly with the light beam and optically sense a surface condition of the first substrate assembly until the sensed surface condition indicates that the first substrate assembly has reached a desired endpoint;

advancing the polishing pad relative to the table and the illumination site after planarizing the first substrate assembly;

removing material from a second substrate assembly by pressing the second substrate assembly against the planarizing surface of the polishing pad and moving the second substrate assembly with respect to the polishing pad; and

subsequently passing a light beam from the illumination site in the table through another optically transmissive view site in the polishing pad that is located at a second area of the elongated slot spaced apart from the first area to at least periodically impinge the second substrate assembly with the light beam and optically sense a surface condition of the second substrate assembly until the sensed surface condition indicates that the second substrate assembly has reached a desired endpoint.

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